

## Going Green for Well-Being: How savouring nature can enhance well-being

**Name of presenters:** Dr Tadhg E. MacIntyre, Dr Deirdre MacIntyre, Dr Moya O'Brien, Dr Aoife A. Donnelly, Dr Giles Warrington, Jessie Barr MSc., Cathal Sheridan MSc. and Andree Walkin MSc.

**Workshop topic:** Nature based solutions for psychological well-being

**Date of workshop:** Wednesday 08 November 2017

**Venue:** Clarisford Park, Killaloe, Co. Clare

**Duration of workshop:** 10am – 4pm

**Cost:** €120 (mid-morning break and light lunch included)

**Maximum number of attendees:** 30

**Learning credits:** 4

**Abstract:** One way to promote human nature interactions is through physical activity in natural environments or what is termed *green exercise*. Our research has explored augmenting this activity with constructs from positive psychology to fully harness the impact of nature. The goal for the activity is to reach a flow state and to enter into mindful moments as you observe nature. A post-exercise 'savouring activity', based on reflecting on the emotions that emerge from reflecting on photos of the experience, further promotes well-being. Our evidence-based workshop will provide two experiences of nature interactions (2k park walk; riverbank stroll at Clarisford Park) to promote well-being. Our interdisciplinary approach will provide a participant as researcher approach and we will measure individual differences both pre and post activity. To explore the role of possible limiting environmental factors, we demonstrate the impact of air quality on well-being by measuring ambient air quality at different sites during the activity. Additionally, our athlete ambassadors will facilitate the engagement with nature by leading the activity and sharing knowledge on the natural environment. Our workshop weaves the concepts of green exercise, blue mind (connectivity with water) in a positive psychology framework which can influence individuals, group and shape our attitudes towards a sustainable environment. This workshop would be appropriate for those engaged in consulting (e.g., Clinical Psychology) those interested in workplace well-being interventions (e.g., Organisational Psychology) and those with an interest in health psychology, performance psychology or researchers in health, sport, physical activity and lifestyle change.

### Presenter biographies

**Dr Tadhg E. MacIntyre**, AFPSI, is a scientist-practitioner and an accredited psychologist in both professional and Olympic sport. Since, 1993, he has been conducting research on mental imagery, embodied cognition and action related processes, centring on motor cognition. He studied psychology in University College Dublin where he graduated with a BA, a first class honours research Masters (1996) and subsequently a PhD in 2007. His research was supervised by Professor of Cognitive Psychology at UCD, Aidan Moran. He has over a decade of experience as an accredited

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consultant most recently working with Munster Rugby (2014-2016). He has published almost 30 refereed publications and five book chapters, and presented keynotes in Ireland, Portugal and UAE. He is an Associate Editor of the leading journal in sport psychology, *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. In 2016, he edited a special issue of *Frontiers in Psychology* on mental health challenges in elite sport. In recent years, Tadhg's interests have included the role of nature based solutions for well-being with outputs including a forthcoming Routledge text and coordinating a H2020 proposal on the topic.

**Dr Deirdre A. MacIntyre** is a clinical psychologist with 20 years experience working with parents and children and consulting with a wide range of professional groups including teachers. A co-founder of ICEP Europe, she has lectured part-time in psychology at University College Dublin and Trinity College, Dublin. Before joining ICEP Europe, Dr MacIntyre was principal psychologist in charge of Child and Adolescent Psychology Services in the Irish Eastern Regional Health Authority. In that capacity she was involved in establishing community based psychology services for children and families. In her clinical work Deirdre was attached to a number of special schools and residential treatment units for young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Deirdre is also the co-author of the Stay Safe Programme, a nationally implemented child protection programme. Among her interests are the early detection of learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or ADHD, effective interventions for behaviour support and green exercise.

**Dr Moya O'Brien** is a clinical psychologist who trained both in Ireland and in the USA. With almost twenty years experience as a clinical psychologist, Dr. O'Brien has worked for many years in the area of special needs and continues to provide consultation to schools. She has taught on the MSC in Education and on the Career Guidance and Counselling course in the National University of Ireland in Maynooth. She is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst. Her experience includes working in the May Institute Cape Cod and working in the Institute for Applied Behaviour Analysis in Los Angeles. She was employed in the Irish Eastern Regional Health Authority as manager of the Parenting Unit before co-founding ICEP Europe. Moya's current research interests include the application of ABA in both mainstream and special school settings and the implementation of school-wide policies for the support of students with special educational needs and/or challenging behaviour.

**Dr Aoife A. Donnelly** is a Lecturer in the School of Environmental Engineering at Trinity College Dublin and was formerly a lecturer in the Dept. of Food Science and Environmental Health at the Dublin Institute of Technology. For three years she was an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded post-doctoral researcher and developed an operational real time air quality forecast model using integrated parametric and non-parametric regression techniques. Her undergraduate degree was in engineering where she graduated with first class honours and subsequently she won a prestigious gold medal and was appointed a scholar of Trinity College. She also received a higher diploma in statistics prior to her doctoral studies at Trinity. Her PhD studies explored background air pollution concentration variations across Ireland. Furthermore, Aoife has published in *Science of the Total Environment*, *the Journal of Environmental Science and Health* and *the Journal of Environmental Modeling and Assessment* and has co-authored several major reports for the EPA. She is currently co-applicant on a number of international funding calls on green exercise and is co-editor of a forthcoming Routledge text on green exercise.

**Dr Giles Warrington** is a Senior Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Physiology with the Health Research Institute at the University of Limerick. He is a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine and he previously worked as a Senior Lecturer in the School of Health and Human Performance at DCU. Prior to moving into academia in 2006, Dr Warrington worked for 12 years at the National Coaching

## PSI Conference Pre-conference Workshop Information

and Training Centre where he was Head of Player/Athlete Services. He was also previously employed by the British Olympic Association where he worked as an Exercise Physiologist at the British Olympic Medical Centre. Dr Warrington has a PhD in Sport and Exercise Physiology from the University of Surrey and is a fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine. He is the scientific research coordinator of an extensive 10 year ongoing research study commissioned by the Turf Club investigating the effects of chronic weight regulation on health and well being in jockeys. His principal research interests focus on performance physiology, in particular weight category sports, environmental physiology and chronobiology. Dr Warrington is an Irish Institute of Sport accredited performance physiologist and is also Head Sports Physiologist and Sports Science Advisor to the Olympic Council of Ireland and was a member of the Irish medical team at the Athens, Beijing and London Olympic Games. Dr Warrington has published 22 peer reviewed journal articles and 35 conference presentations and abstracts.

**Jessie Barr, MSc.**, is a psychology and sociology graduate of the University of Limerick and she subsequently graduated from a MSc. in Sport and Exercise Psychology at the University of the West of England in 2015. Currently, Jessie is on a EHS Faculty funded PhD and is investigating mental health stigma and well-being among injured athletes. Her supervisory team include Dr Tadhg MacIntyre and Dr Giles Warrington. She has recently developed a protocol for measuring depression and negative affect using an objective implicit test. A 2012 Olympian, she is also employed as a Sky Sports Living for Sport Athlete Mentor and was a guest speaker at the Mental Health in Sport Conference at the Maudsley in London and has presented annually at the Research in Imagery and Observation workshop for the past two years.

**Cathal Sheridan, MSc.**, is a psychology and sociology graduate of the University of Limerick and has just completed the MSc. in Sport and Exercise Psychology. He was also a professional rugby player for Munster Rugby until an injury curtailed his return to top flight rugby. Cathal is also a mental health ambassador for the Irish Rugby Union Players.

**Andree Walkin, MSc.**, is a student on the MSc. in Sport and Exercise Psychology at UL. She is currently undertaking research on nature savouring interventions at UL in conjunction with Clarisford Park. Her expertise is in health promotion and marketing of physical activity in the outdoors and she is currently employed by UL in that capacity. Her sporting experiences include mountaineering, extreme kayaking and triathlon competition at international level.